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# Wetmore Institute,

IRVING, KANSAS.

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## Inaugural Address,

September 4th. 1872.

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# Wetmore Institute.

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## INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

By C. C. CREEGAN, President,

September 4th, 1872.

IRVING, MARSHALL COUNTY,

KANSAS.

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NEW YORK .

William S. Dorr, Printer, 21 Courtlandt Street.

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1872.



# ADDRESS.

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According to the time honored custom practiced all over the enlightened world that at the birth of any institution its friends and benefactors meet to hail and bid it welcome—so come we together to-day—all feeling a deep interest in its welfare, growth and development and having a desire to throw in our mite—do what we can for the purpose of nourishing and developing this our child of hope.

The solemnity of this occasion is felt by you all, deeply, but to me whom you have lately given so great a part of this work, the responsibilities of which, hang about me like a great shadow, it seems an occasion to call forth feelings of diffidence, for if it be becoming at any time to indulge in the modest feelings of self-distrust, surely it is proper when standing face to face with these weighty interests and solemn responsibilities.

Here is a field large enough for the ambition of any heart and a labor which, even when pushed to the utmost, will leave much undone that will appear possible and desirable. I come to my work, I trust, not ignorant of its magnitude, feeling it as none others can; but this shadow that seems to loom up before me is not unto darkness, neither is it caused by the cloud of disappointment, but is the necessary attendant of such a work; one fraught with so much honor, by which weak human nature is so apt to be dazzled, were it not for the feeling of a weight of responsibility which always makes one humble.

The real glory of a State does not depend so much on its broad and fertile domain, its swarming population, and the activities of its industrial life, as upon its institutions of learning and the type of manhood which these produce. If this be not true, then China is a more favored land than was Athens, and rather would we choose India than England, but

Athens and England, though pent up into narrow territorial limits and wrenching subsistence from a reluctant soil, have won a place in history, a name far above the nations destitute of these ennobling institutions which shed imperishable luster upon the States that foster them. Before proceeding to discuss the merits of a true American College it is meet that we shall answer the various questions that have been propounded in reference to the Institution which we inaugurate to-day. I pass over the question as to the propriety of sustaining in this place an Educational Institution to supply the needs which Wetmore Institute, or College, is designed to meet. "But," says one, "this is a great work which you are inaugurating and it would be wise for you to count well the cost before proceeding—this is a new country, the population heterogeneous, and many are the trials that will meet you before you reach your goal." In answer to the question how can you do so much in this place, I would beg of you to look abroad and see what has been done under far more unfavorable circumstances than we can possibly meet with here.

Upon an insignificant stream in England known only as a ford for oxen, a University was once founded. The genius of England concentrated there; it became a rallying point for men of culture, learning and literary ambition; its halls became the lists in which the knights of letters met in courtly rivalry; it rapidly grew; its field of labor expanded; it soon made its influence to be felt not only throughout Great Britain but over the whole of Europe, and now the civilized world looks towards Oxford as toward a beacon of light.

Where an unimportant bridge once spanned the river Cam, another institution was created. Under wise counsels it likewise grew in favor, influence and usefulness. Its rulers like the men who are trustees of this institution not being satisfied with making it a High School where a handful of boys were to be educated, each generation carried on its development until Cambridge became the nursery of the talent and genius of the Nation.

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To illustrate the degree of dignity a college gives to a city

or nation, permit me to make a historical allusion. When the city of Leyden, in Holland, was besieged by a Spanish army, the citizens, inspired by a love of liberty and religion made a most desperate resistance. Thousands died by famine and pestilence and when all other means failed they opened the dykes, flooded the camp of the enemy and thus raised the siege, and Holland passed forever from under the Spanish rule. As a recompense for their valor, patriotism, and sacrifices, the States General of Holland gave choice to the city to have certain exemption from taxation; or to become the site of a new College or University. Under the advice of one of the heroic defenders of the city, the citizens chose, rather, to pay their taxes and to take compensation for treasure and life in the establishment of an institution of learning, which became the world renowned, University of Leyden.

Through no such trials and sufferings have we come to establish a new institution in our town and State, but like manna in the wilderness it has providentially fallen into the lap of our prosperity. If rightly used, it will overflow with enriching blessings.

To discuss the foundation principles upon which this, our institution, is built; the part it is to perform in the great field of education; the means by which it shall attain to ends that are practical and that meet the essential wants of our times, shall be our purpose to-day, for it is well that the enterprise be undertaken with wide and correct views of the position which we occupy. Let us consider what a true American institution is. We can then more clearly see what are its wants and its claims.

Much attention has been bestowed upon our system of public schools; it has been studied, revised and improved, until we have now a foundation for the education of our people such as no other country has; but the same cannot be said of our higher institutions of learning. In this one point, America seems to have shown a weakness, a lack of that originality and independence of which we so much love to boast. She did not at first found her higher institutions

to meet the needs and wants of her own people. Our most renowned Colleges and Universities were not of home growth, but were to a great extent patterned after those of England—our mother country it is true—but a nation whose social system is altogether different from ours. We are a decidedly practical people, possessing certain characteristics wholly American, and what we need is a system of education purely American. True, we may get what aid we can from other systems and experiments, either successful or unsuccessful.

Our system of State Normal Schools was partially taken from the Prussian system but so modified and changed as to suit our country. We might say it was the Prussian idea Americanized. No more can one Nation adopt the educational system and plans of another of different form of Government, than can an individual adopt the ideas and habits of another.

England tells us we have no Colleges or Universities in America; that the terms as applied by us are misnomers. Why not say there is no church in America, because it is not established by law as is that of Russia, England or Prussia. As well say we have no army because it is not modeled after the European system. We think one would find it rather a difficult task to convince Drs. Talmage, Beecher or Hall that they have no church.

After witnessing the grand review at Washington at the close of the war between the States, who would dare say we did not have an army at *one* time at least upon the continent of America. As it has been with our public and normal schools so should it be with our Colleges and Universities. And so *will* it be at no distant day—for the error is constantly being pointed out by our leading educationalists, having begun at the lowest making a foundation firm and sure upon which is to be built the beautiful temple of American education. And now all over the land our colleges are throwing off old ideas and customs, and are advancing as our country advances. No longer are we building up schools, after England's model, such as foster in-



dolence and vice, but rather schools to meet the wants of active and energetic Americans. And such is our plan to rear up here in our midst one of America's own schools, tied down by no dogma, hemmed in by no misty ideas that were out of date ages ago, but a school such as will fit us for real active life, whose pupils study not merely for the drill alone, but to obtain practical ideas, that may serve them in after life. Too often has it been the case in time past that students have had thrust upon them dull, dry lessons, in which they could see no possible connection with the outer world. We shall try to make positive men and women of the students entrusted to our training. In this school we shall not ask the question, "How much?" but upon the contrary that more important one, "How well?" We shall not ask, "What do you know?" but "What can you do?" Books will be used as the skillful miner uses his tools; as means to an end. One of the leading writers upon the subject of College Management says: "It is not to the five and twenty graduates, the palm of useful industry should be awarded, but to the many who, in discouragement, on account of the bad management of many of our educational institutions so called, abandoned a cause which is calculated to unfit them for the great battle of life.

Shall we spend six years in acquiring that which can easily be gained in half of the time? I would not say one word to dampen the ardor of the student who is anxious to obtain a thorough classical education. Nay, I would not be so understood; but let us gain this education according to "Normal principles" and not have our students devote a life time to the acquirement of dead words to the exclusion of nearly every thing that is of any value to them in this practical world. It is not the work of the college to dwarf the mental powers and take the pupil from the world in which he lives, but upon the contrary to prepare him for the greatest good in his vocation.

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This school will inspire a love of country, a pride of nationality as broad as our prairies. It shall include integrity,

solid, and enduring as our mountains; and teach that the true greatness of the American people will best be demonstrated by the learning, honesty, temperance and morality of its leading statesmen, to awaken in every youthful mind the grandest impulse to honorable life, a love of America, a love of liberty regulated by law, and a reverence for learning, a devotion to truth and a sincere and simple faith in that *majesty* which marks alike the planet's course and the sparrow's fall.

As the moral and religious culture of our youth should receive the first place in any correct system of instruction, with these brief remarks upon the intellectual work to be accomplished, we will now come to the subject of religious instruction in our schools of learning. Since this institution is controlled by the Presbyterian Church it is very essential that we should know the part that the Bible and religion shall have in the education of the youth who shall enter here. There can be no doubt that the religious instruction of the youth rests with the church and her schools. In every age, from the apostolic to the present time, the church has recognized her vocation as a teacher; she has always felt herself bound to teach the Gospel and bring up her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but she has of late begun to feel that this work belongs to the State rather than herself, to whom the commission was given by the great teacher Christ himself. Christian people cannot consent to have religion banished from our schools, for it is there that the mass of the people learn almost all they know. Religion in its life-giving form has been banished from our public schools. There is no prospect of having religious instruction in our common schools, such as will satisfy the enlightened conscience of the Christian. What, then, must be done? We answer, the institutions of our church must teach the religion of the Bible. It is not necessary that they should include sectarian ideas—far from it. Let them teach a religion having no other creed than the ever blessed “Our Father.”

Let the Bible be the first text-book in all our institutions

# Wetmore Institute.

Rev. EDWARD COOPER, PRESIDENT. }  
Rev. GEORGE F. CHAPIN, SEC'Y. } *Board of Trustees.*  
CHARLES PRESTON, TREASURER. }

CHARLES PRESTON, CHAIRMAN. }  
OSCAR S. STRAIGHT, SEC'Y. } *Executive Committee.*  
E. S. HUNT. }

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IRVING, KANSAS, *May 17th, 1872.*

CHARLES PRESTON, Treasurer, has been appointed Financial Agent of Wetmore Institute, at Irving, Marshall Co, Kansas. This Institution is secured to the Presbytery of Highland by incorporation under the laws of the State, is centrally located in the valley of the Blue, with a surrounding population in great need of a first class Institution. Mr. Preston is commissioned to solicit funds for the erection of additional Buildings, the purchase of Educational appliances and Endowment; and to represent the Institution to the friends of sound religious culture.

EDWARD COOPER,

*President of the Board of Trustees.*

The Trustees have chosen Mr. Preston Financial Agent of Wetmore Institute.

This Institution stands without a rival in a beautiful and rapidly developing portion of Kansas, soon to be the home of a large and influential population.

Those acquainted with the growth of Kansas, understand best the urgency and importance of speedily endowing Wetmore Institute.

The Presbytery of Highland most earnestly commends this Institution to the confidence and liberal support of the friends of Christian culture, both East and West.

In a very few years the adjacent population will be able to foster the enterprise with liberal donations.

Fifty thousand dollars permanently invested for this Institution, would secure to the Church, a centre of Christian culture.

Mr. Preston desires to secure twenty-five thousand dollars in addition to the fifteen thousand subscribed in Kansas and now held by the Trustees at interest.

We solicit for this enterprise, the sympathy and aid of the benevolent.

Rev. WM. ADAMS, D. D.

Rev. JOHN HALL, D. D.

Rev. S. IRENÆUS PRIME, D. D.

Rev. H. M. FIELD, D. D.

Rev. JOEL PARKER, S. T. D.

WILLIAM PATON, Esq.

A. R. WETMORE, Esq.

In view of the tokens of Divine favor to WETMORE INSTITUTE, and the encouraging prospects for the future, as well as the pressing necessity for funds to carry out the judicious plans of the Board of Trustees, for the endowment of the Institution, and the erection of an additional building, already required to accomodate its students, therefore

*Resolved :* That this Presbytery approves the appointment of Charles Preston Treasurer of the Board, as Financial Agent to visit the East and solicit from the generous friends of Christian education, the means to accomplish these objects.

*Resolved :* That we cordially endorse Brother Preston, an Elder in our Church, as a discreet business man, of inflexible integrity and entitled to the confidence and sympathy of Christian people, wherever God may direct his steps.

THOMAS H. DINSMORE, MODERATOR.

E. H. LEDUC, TEMPORARY CLERK.

Attest,

Rev. EDWARD COOPER, STATED CLERK.



of learning. History informs us that there have been at least three periods when education has been summoned to undermine the religion of Christ. 1. The first was shortly after the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire under Constantine. Julian, the apostate, was then on the throne, and one of his proclamations was to the effect that Christians should be prohibited from teaching in the schools of the country; our readers of history will remember that this same Julian who attempted to make education subsidiary to the triumph of Paganism, was he who defied God, and undertook to rebuild the holy temple.

2. About twelve centuries later, the reformation of Luther, that man of God, took place. At the very time of this great reformation the Emperor of Germany expressed it as his opinion "that the only means of propping the decaying cause of Catholicism was to give the rising generation pious Catholic instructors." The power of this unfortunate and I might say unchristian education proved almost fatal to the cause of true Christianity.

3. Our own country is, I fear, in danger of adding the third period to the preceding two, in which education has assumed the attitude of opposing evangelical religion. Will it be said of us, that we have forbidden the instruction of our youth in the things which concern the salvation of their immortal souls? Shall we shut out the rays of light as they proceed from the eternal throne? Are we as a Christian nation prepared to hand over the religious instruction of our youth to the State, knowing that God has given the command to the church to teach? But says one are you not taking a new step advocating new ideas in reference to this important question? I answer that this is no new idea, but one that was advanced by the fathers of our church, who had Christianity in the heart, as I fear we have not as a church to day.

"There is no doubt," says one of the fathers of the church, "that there were schools connected with the Jewish Syna-



gogue where the children of that people were given a knowledge of the Bible as it was there taught by their scribes." The Gentiles also had their schools and academies. It is certain that the Christian Church, which was modeled after the Jewish Synagogue did not omit its wise measures for the promotion of religion ; however, we trust it was the religion of our dear Saviour, instead of that of forms and ceremonies. The plurality of Presbyters in the early church gives support to the very common opinion, that a part of them were engaged in giving instruction. Various texts of scripture seem to intimate that the office of teacher was a distinct and separate office provided by Divine appointment. Dr. Owen, in referring to this view, remarks : " It was the practice of the church, after the Apostles, to have teachers in assemblies like schools ; men who were not called to the whole work of the ministry, were employed to give secular and religious instruction to the children. These statements from the history of the church will give a specimen of the spirit that existed in the primitive church, feeling its way under the guidance of religion toward the godly education of youth. We turn with interest to catch a glimpse of the great idea, Christian education, even in the more corrupt periods of the church. For example, the sixth council of the church at Constantinople, in the year of our Lord 680, enacts, " let the Presbyters have schools in the country towns and villages, and if any of the faithful wish to have their children educated they must not be refused." Under the reign of a different Emperor a proclamation was given to the effect that schools of the Holy Scripture and human learning be erected in order that the fruits of both kinds of learning, divine and human, may increase. During the long dark night of the middle ages the church was still the repository of learning. She guarded the relics of sacred lore, " though she slept over them while guarding them."

The Reformation, as might be expected, not only restored to the church the true word of God, but it also raised a new zeal for Christian instruction. Luther, Malancthon, Calvin Knox, and others, did what they could by the aid of the



spirit to advance both religion and education. Bancroft, our celebrated American historian, says : " We boast of our common schools ; Calvin was the father of popular education, the inventor of the system of free schools." Our friends will not forget that the real glory of these schools was not that they gave general instruction but that they prepared the children, not only for time but for eternity. Knox said of Calvin's school (which he providentially visited, having been driven from Scotland in 1554) : " I neither fear nor shame to say that this is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on the earth since the days of the Apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly taught, but manners and religion to be so sincerely reformed I have not yet seen in any place beside." And when that great and good man returned to his own country five years later, having the highest estimate of Calvin and his plan of Christian culture, *he* also established schools very similar to those he had seen in Geneva. The book of discipline presented to the Church of Scotland at their first General Assembly, held in 1560, contemplated two great agencies to advance the kingdom of our Lord. These were churches and schools ; the godly up-bringing of the youth of the realm was the professed object of education.

When Harvard College was founded in 1642, the students were practiced twice a day in the reading of the Scriptures. They were carefully to attend God's ordinances and be examined on their profiting. When Yale was founded in 1701 the petition set forth that " a college should be erected in the colony wherein youth should be instructed in all parts of learning, to qualify them for public work in Church and State."

We fear that these two great American Colleges, just named, have forgotten the admonition of the founders. We fear that they are not sure as yet that a college is a religious institution.

Will any one solve for us the historical problem of the five centuries from A. D., 1000 to A. D., 1500 ? Why were five hundred years spent in bringing about such a meager change

upon the intellect of Europe? Eighty years have done more for the Sandwich Islanders than five hundred did for the people of France and Germany. Did they not have Christianity of some sort? Did they not have mighty intellects? Why did they not accomplish more during those five centuries?

The Bible was absent from their universities and colleges; absent from the family and closet; and how could they make any progress without the aid of God's great lamp, His own precious word? And now, my friends, I venture the assertion that of the scores and hundreds of institutions of learning that are in existence in our own land, their influence for good to-day, and their influence for good as long as they shall continue to exist in the future, will be in proportion as they lift up the Bible, as the great text book.

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#### WANTS OF OUR INSTITUTION.

1st. The most pressing want of all our institutions of learning is the want of money. The oldest of the colleges and universities in the United States are just as clamorous to-day for an increase of funds as are those recently founded. Harvard University, the oldest, whose endowment is generally regarded as sufficient for all purposes is prevented from lack of funds from accomplishing all that a university should do. Of Yale, a Professor of that college says: The Professors are not half paid, the salaries are not half sufficient to support a family in New Haven. The corps of instructors ought to be doubled. The library should be increased, but there is not a dollar in the treasury. The Professors, in order to live at all, must live in the country. Some of them have longed to visit Europe and other countries in order that they might store their minds with knowledge which cannot otherwise be obtained; but no, they must stay at home for the simple reason that they have not the means to go.

These are samples of the first institutions of our country. Do they not teach us an important lesson? Should not every effort be put forth by the church and people to place our institution upon a firm basis? Should we not aim to

concentrate the greatest fund possible in this center, and never give our consent to any division in this part of the commonwealth.

The endowment of Professorships would put this Institution on a firm basis, and would establish an influence that would be felt throughout the "Great West."

2d. Again this Institution has a right to ask for patience from the church and community. In the work of intellectual training it is impossible to sow and reap in the same day. You have a right to expect constant progress, enlargement, and improvement, but we cannot spring into being with the accumulated resources equal to that of some of the older institutions of learning by the waving of "any magical wand, however potent." Our work is a growth; but give to Wetmore Institute the years you give your youths to come to their majority and she will rival in her learned Professors, in her elegant buildings, her laboratory, library, and cabinet, works of art and museum, many of the most favored institutions in our fair land. This great work will always require ceaseless vigilance, exhaustless patience, and often a "lofty and daring courage, that sees no obstacles." In view of all the known difficulties to the realization of our ideal of a college to bring it rapidly to that condition, development, and influence, at which we aim, I must earnestly entreat for patience and a favorable interpretation of our acts from you all.

It is becoming upon this occasion, after speaking of our many wants, to tender our sincere thanks to the friends of this institution at the east, who have done so much for us already, and who have pledged themselves upon condition of our faithfulness to the trust reposed upon us, to do much for us in the future.

We cannot close this address without speaking of one whose name has doubtless been upon the lips of every individual before me this morning. Need I name A. R. Wetmore of New York City as the benefactor of this institution? We tender him our earnest congratulations, that in the Providence of Almighty God, his life has been prolonged beyond

the ripe age of three score years and ten, and that he yet retains that vigor of body, strength of mind, and benevolence of heart, which promises to him many years of usefulness and honor.

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We trust that our friend may be spared to see the fruit of his seed-sowing in this place—that this institution may be worthy of the honored name it bears. That from its school of science and art, its lectures and laboratories, library and reading-room, it will be the “great centre of mighty forces,” from which year after year as they deepen their channels and widen their sweep, will proceed influences which can never be fully estimated.

Now, a word to the Trustees:

Gentlemen managers of this institution your task is by no means done; your work blooming with success is only now in its infancy. Lay not to your souls the flattering unction that your duties are at an end. You will find opportunities enough to draw forth all your noble aspirations to accomplish a glorious work for the Master in this place. The seed is now germinating, the tender plant is now taking root. It is yours and ours to nurture it into a noble tree, by wisdom, enlarged views, a far-seeing policy which reaches beyond your life-time and mine. Use rightly the means which a good God has placed within your power and rely upon it, this institution will be an honor to the Church and State. It needs no word from me to convince this people of the wisdom of the Presbytery in the appointment of the men who are now the law makers for this school. They are your citizens, known by you all as men of action; men who cannot be moved by every wind that blows though it blow ever so hard. How important it is that these men should be representative men. How very essential that they take advanced views in regard to the subject of college management. These men who stand behind the faculty, and who hold the reins of power, can, if malicious, ruin this Institution. Speaking for the faculty, we ask from you, the trustees, your hearty co-operation and earnest prayers.

A word to the students, and I am done. To-day we open the institution without a class, and with but a few students enrolled; but for those who shall honor themselves by forming the first class on to-morrow, I shall speak a word. You have the faith to come to this new institution, trusting its future. The success and reputation of this school are largely in your hands. Your faithfulness and zeal as students will give us a good name abroad, inducing scores and hundreds to come and enter these halls; and thus you will greatly aid us in enlarging our institution and means of instruction. Or, upon the other hand, by idleness, insubordination, or neglect, you may seriously injure all.

Dr. Thomas Arnold, of Rugby, once said to the boys in his great school, "It is not necessary that we should have a hundred students here; but it is necessary that every student should be a *gentleman*."

So I say to not only the boys, but to *these ladies* and *gentlemen* students, we do not need a hundred students here in order to have a good school, but we do need *ladies* and *gentlemen*; and such I trust we shall find in those to be instructed by us. Come now, my young friends, and let us take you by the hand and lead you along the path of virtue and knowledge, up the hill of science to that point where you shall be able to stand alone and make your influence felt by those around you. Show to the students that may follow you by your careful investigation and thorough work that you study because you love to, and not because you are obliged to. Let the entire world know that there is at least one institution which bears the name of a college where idleness, hazing and all kindred vices which have crept into many of our colleges shall be considered a disgrace.

While you make the institution, the institution will make you. By your noble and manly conduct here you will bear an honored part in building up a college which you will not be ashamed to call your *alma mater*, and of which some of you will be trustees and professors and in which all will have an honest pride. Young ladies and gentlemen, we welcome alike to the trials and honors of *this* our own



“*infant college*,” and now upon this autumnal day—long to be remembered—as the bright sun inclines towards the west, the crescent glory of a new fountain of light has taken its place in the firmament of literature and science. As a ship it begins to glide over the waters well manned rejoicing in its boundless life, its canvass full spread and every heart beating with joy and hope of a successful voyage. Speaking for the trustees, faculty, students, and all concerned in this great and good work, I say God bless the ship, God bless the builders, God bless the crew, and not to be forgotten, God bless all the passengers.